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FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7555
INFO RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 1394
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 1219
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 2354
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0301

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 USUN NEW YORK 001004

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [CU](#) [KN](#) [KS](#) [RS](#) [IS](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: UNGA MEETS ON IAEA REPORT: ELBARADEI'S SWAN SONG,
IRAN, DPRK, CUBA, ISRAEL, AND OTHERS DEBATE THE AGENCY AND
NON-PROLIFERATION

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: The UN General Assembly met in plenary to discuss the Report of the International Atomic Energy (IAEA), hearing for the last time from its outgoing Director-General, Mohammad ElBaradei, who emphasized the importance of not isolating countries, using diplomatic means to address proliferation, and congratulated President Obama for the recent steps taken by the U.S to begin reducing weapons stocks in cooperation with the Russian Federation. After ElBaradei's remarks, the following countries spoke: Malaysia, Sweden, the Russian Federation, Egypt, Belarus, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Cuba, Indonesia, Sudan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, Switzerland, South Africa, Kuwait, Japan, Singapore, Ukraine, Ethiopia, China, Pakistan, the United States, Venezuela, and Libya. The Republic of Korea accused the DPRK of provocative actions, while the DPRK defended its weapons program and blamed the U.S. for leading it to develop a nuclear deterrent. Iran defended its nuclear program as existing only for peaceful means and cautioned against double standards that allow leniency towards Israel. Major themes included criticism of Israel's alleged nuclear program, a call to use nuclear technology to assist developing nations, an emphasis on the right of all countries to develop peaceful nuclear technology, and warm words for both the role of the IAEA and its out-going Director General. The U.S. statement emphasized strong support for the IAEA and called for an approach to the Middle East to proceed in a non-politicized way. The United States and dozens of other countries co-sponsored draft Resolution A/64/L.7, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency,"⁸ which passed without a vote. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) ELBARADEI REFLECTS ON DEVELOPMENT, DIPLOMACY, IRAN, THE DPRK, IRAQ, AND THE UNITED STATES: Mohammad ElBaradei delivered his final address to the United Nations as IAEA Director General and affirmed that the Agency has "gained universal respect for its independence and objectivity in nuclear verification, safety and security." He praised efforts to bring nuclear technology to the developing world and encouraged even more work in this sector calling energy "the engine of development." He highlighted the Program of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) and the Technical Cooperation Program as two initiatives that have well served those most in need. ElBaradei commented that "the gravest threat the world faces today, in my opinion, is that extremists could get hold of nuclear or radioactive materials" and called for an expansion of the IAEA's legal authority, technology, and most critically funding to assist the IAEA in its mandate. ElBaradei addressed the war in Iraq, and noted that he will "always lament the fact that a tragic war was launched in Iraq, which has cost the lives of possibly hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians." He referred to the situation with the DPRK as a "glaring example of the fragility and shortcomings of the non-proliferation regime" and suggested that both Iraq and the DPRK prove that

countries should not be isolated and diplomacy should run its course. ElBaradei urged Iran to be forthcoming and said that there are "a number of questions and allegations relevant to the nature of their program" that must be "clarified by Iran through transparency and cooperation with the Agency." He called President Obama's recent non-proliferation agenda a "courageous initiative" and said that the efforts of the weapons states to reduce their stock will help grant them "the moral authority to call on the rest of the world to curb the proliferation of these inhumane weapons."

13. (U) WARM WORDS FOR THE IAEA AND MOHAMMAD ELBARADEI: Many countries praised the IAEA and the leadership of its outgoing Director General. South Africa commented that ElBaradei "had virtues that contributed towards building confidence about the work of the Agency." Egypt thanked ElBaradei for his "balanced role" and helping to develop "this most important and sensitive international body." The Republic of Korea told delegates that ElBaradei will "undoubtedly leave a lasting legacy" thanks to his "commitment to professional impartiality, transparency and equitable cooperation." Sweden, speaking on behalf of the E.U., noted that ElBaradei's 2005 Nobel Peace Prize was a "just recognition of the achievements both of the Director General and of the Agency." South Africa lauded the "commendable activities undertaken by the Agency in strengthening international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, as well as in nuclear science, technology and applications."

14. (U) MANY COUNTRIES REITERATE RIGHT OF ALL COUNTRIES TO

USUN NEW Y 00001004 002 OF 004

PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY: A theme stressed by nearly all of the countries speaking was the importance of preserving the right of countries to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Countries posited this as a basic right enshrined in international law. Belarus affirmed its stance that efforts must be made to "promote equal, non-discriminatory access of all countries concerned to the benefits of the nuclear energy." Egypt painted the expansion of peaceful nuclear technology as critical to address poverty since "developing countries face growing needs to clean and affordable sources of energy." China took a similar view noting that both economic-development needs and climate change have led to the increase in countries seeking nuclear technology.

15. (U) CALLS FOR NON-PROLIFERATION AND THE IAEA ROLE: Most countries emphasized the need to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. Venezuela stressed the IAEA's role in non-proliferation and criticized the recent Security Council Resolution 1887, by noting that Venezuela rejects initiatives that take legitimacy away from the international disarmament system. Sweden called the IAEA "an essential part of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime as its prime objective is to detect and deter the diversion of nuclear materials for use in nuclear weapons." Ukraine reaffirmed the importance of the IAEA and called it the corner-stone of the non-proliferation regime. Pakistan took an opportunity to "reiterate Pakistan's firm commitment to nuclear non-proliferation" and added that efforts globally must be "strengthened on the basis of moral, political and international commitments." South Africa maintained - along with others - that radioactive waste management ought to be considered a high priority.

16. (U) CUBA SAYS U.S. ECONOMIC BLOCKADE PREVENTS ITS ABILITY TO ACQUIRE NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY: Cuba called attention to the U.S. economic "blockade" of its country, noting that it prevents the IAEA from operating there since U.S. firms are unable to sell their equipment to Cuba, fearing potential sanctions. Referring to Iran, Cuba said the world must do away with double standards. Cuba affirms "the inalienable right for countries to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes" and "rejects any attempts" to use the issue as a

"means of political coercion." Cuba contended that the only road to peace and security is the total elimination of all nuclear weapons. Lastly, Cuba bemoaned the bloated size of the war industry in some countries and praised ElBaradei for his impartiality.

¶7. (U) SEVERAL COUNTRIES CRITICIZE ISRAEL FOR ALLEGED WEAPONS PROGRAM: Egypt mentioned the most recent IAEA General Conference, which adopted a resolution entitled "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities" and referred to it as a document "alerting the international community of the dangers represented by those capabilities which remain outside any international control in the area of safeguards, nuclear safety or security." Libya stated that there can be no progress in making the Middle East free of nuclear weapons as long as Israel refuses to relinquish its own supply. Kuwait referred to "Israeli intransigence" and requested "the international community to pressure Israel to join the NPT." Indonesia expressed a "deep concern of continued failure to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East" and contended that "progress will only happen if Israel places all its nuclear weapons under Agency control." Sudan said the inability to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is due to Israel's unwillingness to cooperate.

¶8. (U) IRAN CALLS TREATMENT OF ISRAEL A DOUBLE-STANDARD AND DEFENDS ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM AS PEACEFUL: Iran criticized the IAEA for spending too much time being used as a "verification tool" and said that this function was directly related to a "few countries" that "have attempted to degrade it to a uni-purpose entity during the last decade." But in speaking to this very role, Iran called the IAEA "the sole competent body for verification activities in accordance with the provisions of the Statute and the NPT." Iran blamed "certain nuclear-weapon States and their allies" for creating "various restrictions and limitations on the way of transfer of nuclear material, equipment and technology to developing countries with peaceful activities." Iran characterized those states cooperating with the "Zionist regime" as an example of "non-compliance both to the letter and spirit of the NPT" and said that the treatment towards Israel represents "double standards and discriminatory approaches." Iran blamed Israel

USUN NEW Y 00001004 003 OF 004

for thwarting efforts to remove a nuclear threat from the Middle East and declared that Israel is "the main obstacle in establishing the nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East." Finally, Iran stressed that its nuclear program "is, and has always been, for peaceful purposes."

¶9. (U) SEVERAL COUNTRIES WEIGH IN ON IRAN: Kuwait encouraged Iran, which it referred to as the "friendly Islamic Republic" to "continue its cooperation with the IAEA with transparency" and encouraged a diplomatic solution including the discussions between the group of 5 1 in Geneva and Iran. Japan noted that "Iran's nuclear program is a source of concern for the international community."

¶10. (U) RUSSIAN FEDERATION LAUDS COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES: The Russian Federation highlighted its recent cooperation with the U.S. and commented that the joint statement "confirmed the commitment to the buildup of cooperation aimed at prevention of nuclear-weapons proliferation and preclusion of acts of nuclear terrorism." Russia went on to say that it hopes the steps will lead to a decrease in the use of highly enriched uranium for civilian applications. Russia also praised the effectiveness of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, put forward by the Presidents of Russia and the United States in 2006, and said that it has now reached a "global dimension." Russia noted its efforts working with the U.S., the IAEA and partner countries to return to Russia spent highly enriched uranium. Russia discussed other positive steps it is taking in conjunction with the IAEA - including its implementation of the IAEA International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) - a

nd endorsed the body,s work as "strengthening international security."

¶11. (U) THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA BLAMES DPRK FOR "PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS" AND "BLATANT VIOLATIONS": The Republic of Korea emphasized that "the peaceful resolution of the DPRK nuclear issue is vital to securing lasting peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia." It expressed concern that recently "the international efforts for verifiable denuclearization of the DPRK have faced a series of provocative actions taken by the DPRK" and accused the country of blatantly violating the Six-Party Talks agreements as well as UN Security Council Resolutions. ROK also noted the IAEA General Conference Resolution of last September, which it hopes will lead to the "DPRK,s realization that its nuclear ambition will not be tolerated." It urged the DPRK to return to the Six-Party Talks, to abandon its nuclear program, and to return to the NPT regime.

¶12. (U) DPRK DEFENDS ITSELF IN EXPLANATION OF VOTE: The DPRK delivered an explanation of vote and called the IAEA,s position prejudiced and urged the IAEA towards impartiality. The DPRK blamed U.S. policy for the behavior of the DPRK, including its testing of a second nuclear weapon, and accused the U.S. of maintaining a hostile policy towards the DPRK. The DPRK accused the U.S. of aggravating the Korean peace process, and offered a commitment to continue talks with the U.S., possibly within a multi-lateral setting.

¶13. (U) U.S. STATEMENT: The U.S. delivered a statement reiterating its support for the IAEA in "all facets of its work" and added its commitment to finding multilateral solutions to global challenges. The U.S. noted its support for the IAEA role of expanding the peaceful use of nuclear energy, while at the same time preventing proliferation of weapons. With respect to the Middle East, the U.S. emphasized that any efforts to address nuclear-related issues there must be done in a "comprehensive and non-politicized" way. The U.S. noted reservations on the adoption of the Israeli Nuclear Capabilities text at the recent IAEA General Conference. Full text of the U.S. statement can be found at <http://usun.state.gov/briefing/statements/2009/131211.htm>.

¶14. (U) ISRAEL EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE IN EXPLANATION OF POSITION: Following the adoption of the resolution, Israel explained its position and noted disappointment in the recent IAEA General Conference resolution, and called the "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities" text as completely one-sided. Israel also complained that other nations in the Middle East have shown unwillingness to promote regional talks aimed at establishing a nuclear-weapons-free zone. Israel disassociated itself from the reference in the report to the attack of Israel on the

USUN NEW Y 00001004 004 OF 004

"Dir Azour" site in Syria and noted that this was a politically motivated reference that contrasts the usual professionalism of the Agency.
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